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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-07 MC-02 ACDA-05

/080 W
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O R 010930Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 773
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMCONSUL ASMARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 2326

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCLR, ET, SA, MASS
SUBJECT: OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE FOR AMMUNITION AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA

REF: A. STATE 69497 B. JIDDA 2247

1. AFTER BEING DEFINTELY INFORMED BY CIVIL AVIATION
DIRECTORATE MARCH 30 THAT OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE WOULD HAVE
TO COME THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, WE SUBMITTED FORMAL
REQUEST AT LEVEL OF OFFICER IN CHARGE AMERICAN AFFAIRS.
WE CHOSE THIS LEVEL IN THE HOPE OF GETTING EXPEDITIOUS BUT
OTHERWISE ROUTINE RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST (THOUGH WE DID
ALSO NOTE THE POSSIBLE POLITICAL INTEREST). IN OUR REQUEST
WE ASKED FOR CLEARANCE FOR THEFIRST FLIGHT APRIL 2, CLEAR-
ANCE TO BE VALID FOR 72 HOURS AFTER THAT DATE.
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2. LATE AFTERNOON MARCH 31 DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER MAS'UD RAISED THE ISSUE WITH THE AMBASSADOR WHO RELATED THE REQUEST TO OUR PREVIOUSLY EXPLAINED DECISION TO PROVIDE LIMITED RESUPPLY TO ETHIOPIAN ARMY. MAS'UD SAID THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT THE LATE KING WOULD HAVE TURNED DOWN THE OVERFLIGHT REQUEST. WHY, HE ASKED, WAS IT NECESSARY TO OVERFLY SAUDI ARABIA AT ALL? AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT HE NOT SURE BUT ASSUMED IT RELATED TO SAFETY AND PERHAPS INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT EGYPT HAD GRANTED OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES. MAS'UD SAID THAT HE WOULD REFER THE MATTER TO "HIGHER AUTHORITY" FOR A DECISION.

2. WE ARE NOT SURE HOW THE SAG WILL REPLY TO OUR OVERFLIGHT REQUEST. THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT, UNWILLING TO GRANT THE CLEARANCE AND RELUCTANT TO OFFEND US, THEY WILL NOT REPLY AT ALL UNTIL THE TIME FOR OVERFLIGHT IS WELL PAST.

4. WE AGREE IT PREFERABLE BUT STILL DO NOT SEE WHY SAUDI OVERFLIGHT NECESSARY. WE HAVE DISCUSSED OVERFLIGHTS IN GENERAL WITH AMERICAN FAA OFFICIALS ASSIGNED TO AN ICAO MISSION IN JIDDA. THEY ALSO DON'T SEE WHY CLEARANCE REQUIRED. IT BEYOND OUR TECHNICAL COMPETENCE TO JUDGE BUT PASS ON FOLLOWING SUGGESTION INFORMALLY GIVEN TO US: AIRCRAFT FROM EGYPT FOLLOWS AIRLAND RED 39 ON BEARING 124 DEGREES FROM LUXOR TURNING RIGHT SOON AFTER ENTERING JIDDA FIR. AIRCRAFT COULD PASS FROM CAIRO TO JIDDA FIR AND THEN TO ASMARA SUB FIR WITHOUT ENTERING KHARTOUM FIR OR SAUDI AIR SPACE.
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